



EQUITY TEAM PURPOSE

Seattle Opera's Equity Team is a space for discussion on race, identity, community, and equity with a foundation of undoing systems of oppression in opera and the arts and culture sector. The team approaches its work through a lens that centers BIPOC voices and narratives of those who are most impacted by oppression and discrimination. In working to decolonize opera, we intentionally decenter whiteness and/or perspectives through a white lens.

The Equity Team operates symbiotically with Seattle Opera's Racial Equity and Social Impact plan as an integral point for feedback and iteration, but does not solely move the RESI work of the company forward.

In action, the Equity Team:

- Assesses racial equity issues that impact staff, audiences, artists, and our community and offers solutions or alternative practices to company leadership.
 - Identifies areas where actions or intentions are incongruent with the Racial Equity and Social Impact plan
 - Identifies long-standing inequitable and exclusionary traditions, practices, and biases in our art form.
 - Raises questions when we observe inequitable processes and decisions as a "given" or "the way things have been done."
 - Interrupts or calls for change when actions are causing or will cause harm.
 - Provides a peer-level connection point to visiting artists and individuals who many not be comfortable approaching leadership with equity concerns.
- Advances racial equity and social justice in opera by engaging in the company's programming.
 - Engages with artistic vision, sharing evolving equity conversations that affect our community and shape audience perspectives.
 - Offers to review possible future season operas and provide feedback from an equity lens.

- Provides regular feedback to Department Directors and Seattle Opera Leadership regarding equity concerns in productions, programs, or other public offerings.
- Provides a supportive, constructive environment to talk about lived experiences of team members.
 - Creates space for feedback, reflection, and calls to action.
 - Builds accountability among team members.
 - Understands that lived experiences are intersectional and identities are not monolithic.
 - Recognizes that the emotional labor is inherently carried by BIPOC team members.
- Extends an invitation for all staff members to participate.
 - Shares regular updates on team work at Seattle Opera staff meetings.
 - Invites fellow staff members to join meetings ad hoc or speak privately with task force members at any time.
 - Provides articles, books, and other resources for team members and staff to continue individual learnings.
 - Highlights art and community events that intersect with equity work, for personal or equity team learning opportunities.
- Offers additional levels of participation through affinity groups and caucusing opportunities
 - BIPOC Affinity Group
 - White Allies
 - LGBTQ+
 - Working Parents
 - Access/Accessibility
 - Relational Violence (Title TBD)

EQUITY TEAM MEMBER EXPECTATIONS

Participating team members understand and agree:

- To remain open-minded.
- That racism and white privilege exist.
- To take shared lived experiences and descriptions of racism at face value.
- That whataboutism and “devil’s advocate” statements perpetuate harm.
- That you will say something wrong, and that’s part of the process.

- To be open to being corrected, understand the pain a statement or action has caused, and be willing to acknowledge and improve.
- To be open to a BIPOC team member calling you out /calling you in.
- This work is uncomfortable, messy, and does not have an end goal.
- To represent the Equity Team and/or Affinity Groups as an ambassador.